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DEPT FOR EUR/CE JAMIE MOORE

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [CU](#) [HU](#)  
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED: EU ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL  
SOCIETY IN CUBA

REF: SECSTATE 131637

Classified By: PolOff Ryan Leong; reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[11](#). (C) PolOff delivered ref points to Ministry of Foreign Affairs Cuba Desk Officer Istvan Sandor on January 19. Sandor greatly appreciated the update on U.S. policy towards Cuba and stated that Hungary's position has been, and will remain, consistently firm with regards to human rights, political prisoners, and civil society in Cuba. Notably, Hungary does not support any change to the EU Common Position as advocated by Spain but would be amenable to a new version of the document as long as it retained the same elements as the original.

[12](#). (C) In response to reftel para 11 questions, Sandor characterized the Hungarian-Cuban bilateral relationship as largely focused on economics, as demonstrated by a trade delegation sent to Cuba in 2009. However, commercial interests remain very limited, with some discussion given to energy sector development. Sandor stated that the three-person Hungarian mission in Havana maintained weekly contact with members of civil society and the opposition, most frequently at the counselor level. Hungarian diplomats have visited political prisoners or their families on occasion. Unfortunately, according to Sandor, Hungary lacked the financial resources for more energetic programs to engage Cuban citizens by providing access to information or other projects. Sandor summarized Hungary's policy towards Cuba as "hard-line" and in step with the U.S., U.K., Germany, Czech Republic, Sweden, and Poland.  
KOUNALAKIS